

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CONAKR 00916 111348Z
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R 111044Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY CONAKRY
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4307
INFO AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

C O N F I D E N T I A L CONAKRY 0916

FRANKFURT FOR GAO EDER

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: AGAO, EMIW, GV
SUBJECT: PROPOSED GAO VISIT TO GUINEA

REF: STATE 113750

1. SUMMARY: EMBASSY BELIEVES GOG WOULD SEE NON-BAUXITIC SOURCES OF ALUMINA AS SERIOUS THREAT TO GUINEA. GAO DISCUSSION OF SUBJECT WITH GOG COULD BE UNSETTLING AND HARMFUL TO US INTERESTS HERE. AS BEST SOURCES OF INFORMATION ARE LIKELY TO BE IBRD AND HALCO, CONTACT WITH THEM MIGHT MORE EFFECTIVELY BE MADE IN THE US. IF GAO REPRESENTATIVES WOULD LIKE TO MAKE LARGELY IN-HOUSE VISIT TO GUINEA, EMBASSY WILL BE GLAD TO RECEIVE THEM, DISCUSS THE SUBJECT AND SET UP APPOINTMENTS WITH SELECTED EXPATRIATE MEMBERS OF CBG STAFF.
END SUMMARY

2. EMBASSY IS CONCERNED THAT SUBJECT OF GAO STUDY ("CONSTRAINTS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF COMMERCIAL SCALE NON-BAUXITIC U.S. SOURCES OF ALUMINA") WILL WORRY GUINEAN OFFICIALS AND BE READ "HOW TO DEVELOP COMPETITION FOR OUR ONLY LARGE SOURCE OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE". BELIEVE GOG OFFICIALS WOULD BE LOATHE TO COOPERATE IN ANY WAY ONCE THEY GET THE RIFT.
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2. UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES, WE QUESTION BOTH UTILITY AND ADVISABILITY OF APPROACHING GOG ON THE SUBJECT. GOG OPPOSITION TO AND LIVERLY CONCERN OVER THE PROPOSAL ARE FOREGONE CONCLUSIONS, AND WE FEAR DISCUSSION OF PROPOSAL HERE MIGHT RAISE UNHELPFUL QUESTIONS AS TO US ATTITUDES TOWARD GUINEAN INTERESTS AND PROSPECTS

FOR GUINEAN DEVELOPMENT.

3. BELIEVE CERTAIN NON-GUINEAN OFFICIALS AT CBG WOULD BE WILLING TO DISCUSS THE SUBJECT WITH GAO TEAM, BUT THIS WOULD NOT BE THE CASE AT FRIGUIA, WHERE EXPATRIATES ARE MOSTLY FRENCH AND EMBASSY GETS INFO LARGELY FROM GOG. DATA ON SOVIET-RUN BAUXITE WORKS, OBK, ARE EXTREMELY CLOSELY HELD AND WOULD PROBABLY BE UNAVAILABLE TO GAO AUDITORS. GAO MIGHT DO BEST TO CONTACT HALCO AND IBRD IN US SINCE DATA ABOUT GUINEAN BAUXITE AND ALUMINA SITUATION WILL BE ACCESSIBLE AND BETTER DIGESTED THERE THAN IN GUINEA ITSELF.

4. COMMENT: IN LIGHT ABOVE CONSIDERATIONS, EMBASSY SERIOUSLY QUESTIONS UTILITY OF PROPOSED GAO VISIT TO GUINEA. WE HOPE SUBJECT OF GAO STUDY HAS NOT BEEN MENTIONED TO GUINEAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON. PLEASE INFORM US IF GAO WOULD WANT TO VISIT CONAKRY FOR ESSENTIALLY IN-HOUSE DISCUSSION OF THE MATTER.
CROSBY

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